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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4072
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BOGOTA 02730

STATE FOR ARA/AND
STATE PLEASE PASS TO U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
AGENCY, INTERNATIONAL DIVISION

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: SENV, EPET, PTER, CO
SUBJECT: ECOLOGICAL IMPACT OF GUERRILLA ATTACKS ON
CANO-LIMON OIL PIPELINE

REF: BOGOTA 1375 AND PREVIOUS

1. SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH THE PRESS HAS DECRIED THE
EXTENSIVE ECOLOGICAL DAMAGE FROM THE 20 GUERRILLA
SABOTAGE ATTACKS ON THE CANO-LIMON-COVENAS OIL PIPELINE
BETWEEN JANUARY 12 AND FEBRUARY 9, OIL INDUSTRY SOURCES
BELIEVE THE DAMAGE IS LESS SEVERE. POST HAS OBTAINED
FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE FEBRUARY 9 ATTACK THAT SENT
OIL INTO VENEZUELA AND A MORE DETAILED LIST OF THE
PIPELINE ATTACKS. END SUMMARY

2. ON FEBRUARY 22, ECONOFF MET WITH

OF OCCIDENTAL PETROLEUM, TO DISCUSS THE
DAMAGE RESULTING FROM THE 20 SABOTAGE ATTACKS BETWEEN
JANUARY 12 AND FEBRUARY 9 BY THE GUERRILLA GROUP ELN

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DATE/CASE ID: 1 NOV 2002 200201334
CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.6(6)
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 23 FEB 2013

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(PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY) ON THE CANO LIMON-COVENAS
PIPELINE.

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PROVIDED US WITH THE FOLLOWING
TABLE LISTING THE ATTACKS, DATE, LOCATION, CAUSE, AND
ESTIMATED AMOUNT SPILLED.

(1) DATE: JANUARY 12
LOCATION: PY KM 6 AND 213, LAS MONAS
EVENT: SABOTAGE, GAS AND BUTANE BURNT, FIRE CONTROLLED
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 15
ESTIMATED LOSS: 3773 MM OF GAS PRODUCTION

(2) DATE: JANUARY 12
LOCATION: P/L KM 466 AND 500, EL CARMEN CREEK
EVENT: SABOTAGE, SPILL REACHED SIMANA RIVER
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 16
ESTIMATED LOSS: 25,000 BBLs

(3) DATE: JANUARY 12
LOCATION: P/L KM 528 AND 100, SOLEDAD
EVENT: SABOTAGE, OIL CAUGHT FIRE, ONE HECTARE AFFECTED
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 15
ESTIMATED LOSS: 2,200 BBLs

(4) DATE: JANUARY 13
LOCATION: P/L KM 401, LA CAMPANA
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EVENT: SABOTAGE, SPILL REACHED TARRA AND CATATUMBO
- RIVERS
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 17
ESTIMATED LOSS: 10,000 BBLs

(5) DATE: JANUARY 13
LOCATION: P/L KM 436/437, LAS FLORES
EVENT: SABOTAGE, SPILL REACHED TARRA AND CATATUMBO
- RIVERS
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 17
ESTIMATED LOSS: 10,000 BBLs

(6) DATE JANUARY 15

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LOCATION: P/L KM 99 AND 800 BOJABA
EVENT: SABOTAGE, PIPE DENTED BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 16
ESTIMATED LOSS: 2,000 BBLs

(7) JANUARY 15
LOCATION: P/L KM 45, LA ESMERALDA
EVENT: SABOTAGE, OIL CONTAINED IN APPROXIMATELY ONE
- FORESTED HECTARE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 17
ESTIMATED LOSS: 4,000 BBLs

(8) DATE: JANUARY 17
LOCATION: P/L KM 493.75, LV 31, PELAYA
EVENT: SABOTAGE EXPLOSIVE DEVICE, 50 PERCENT REDUCTION
- P/L
COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 20
ESTIMATED LOSS: 2,000 BBLs

(9) DATE: JANUARY 17
LOCATION: P/L KM 121 AND 300, CUBUGON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 04 BOGOTA 02730

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TAGS: SENV, EPET, PTER, CO
SUBJECT: ECOLOGICAL IMPACT OF GUERRILLA ATTACKS ON
EVENT: SABOTAGE, SPILL REACHED ARAUCA RIVER
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 19
ESTIMATED LOSS: 2,000 BBLs

(10) DATE: JANUARY 18
LOCATION: P/L KM 71, SARAVERA
EVENT: SABOTAGE, P/L BROKEN BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 22
ESTIMATED LOSS: 0 BBLs

(11) DATE: JANUARY 18
LOCATION: P/L KM 680, SAN PEDRO
EVENT: SABOTAGE, P/L BROKEN BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 21
ESTIMATED LOSS: 250 BBLs
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(12) DATE: JANUARY 18
LOCATION: P/L KM 680 AND 30, SAN PEDRO
EVENT: SABOTAGE, P/L BROKEN BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 21
ESTIMATED LOSS: 250 BBLs

(13) DATE: JANUARY 20
LOCATION: P/L KM 16.9, EL CARANAL
EVENT: SABOTAGE, P/L DENTED BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 22
ESTIMATED LOSS: 1,000 BBLs

(14) DATE: JANUARY 21
LOCATION: P/L KM 66
EVENT: SABOTAGE, P/L BROKEN BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE JANUARY 23
ESTIMATED LOSS: 0 BBLs

(15) DATE: JANUARY 21
LOCATION: P/L KM 732M ALTOS SINCELEJO
EVENT: SABOTAGE, P/L BROKEN BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 24
ESTIMATED LOSS: 0 BBLs

(16) DATE: JANUARY 22
LOCATION: P/L KM 171.4, SAN BERNARDO

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EVENT: SABOTAGE, P/L BROKEN BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 26
ESTIMATED LOSS: 0 BBLs

(17) DATE: JANUARY 23
LOCATION: P/L KM 411 AND 800. EL ASERRIO
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EVENT: SABOTAGE, P/L BROKEN BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 31
ESTIMATED LOSS: 10,000 BBLs

(18) DATE: JANUARY 24
LOCATION: P/L KM 53 AND 300, LA ESMERALDA
EVENT: SABOTAGE, P/L BROKEN BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 25
ESTIMATED LOSS: 0 BBLs

(19) JANUARY 28
LOCATION: P/L KM 85 AND 500, SARAVERA
EVENT: SABOTAGE, P/L BROKEN BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 29
ESTIMATED LOSS: 6,000 BBLs

(20) DATE: JANUARY 29
LOCATION: P/L KM 485 AND 300, PELAYA
EVENT: DEFECTIVE WELD
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: FEBRUARY 1
ESTIMATED LOSS: 0 BBLs

(21) DATE: FEBRUARY 9
LOCATION: P/L KM 403, LA CAMPANA
EVENT: SABOTAGE, P/L BROKEN BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE
REPAIR COMPLETION DATE: FEBRUARY 12
ESTIMATED LOSS: 50,000

TOTAL ESTIMATED LOSSES 124,700 BBLs.

4. OXY ADMITS THAT ITS TOTAL FIGURE OF 124,700 BBLs
SPILLED IS TOO LOW.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 04 BOGOTA 02730

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5. SENIOR ECOPETROL AND OXY OFFICIALS TOLD US PRIVATELY THAT HUMAN ERROR WAS TO BLAME FOR THE SIZE OF THE FEBRUARY 9 SPILL. ACCORDING TO THESE OFFICIALS, THE ECOPETROL FIELD TEAM REPAIRED TWO BREAKS IN THE PIPELINE, NOT REALIZING THAT THERE WAS A THIRD BREAK. THINKING THE LINE WAS FULLY REPAIRED, ECOPETROL ORDERED PUMPING TO RESUME. ECOPETROL ATTRIBUTED THE LACK OF PRESSURE IN THE LINE TO THE FACT THAT IT WAS EMPTY SINCE PUMPING HAD CEASED ON JANUARY 12. BY THE TIME ECOPETROL

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REALIZED THE LINE WAS STILL BROKEN, AT LEAST 96,000 BBLs HAD SPILLED. THIS VERSION OF EVENTS IS NOT WIDELY KNOWN. MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE ECOPETROL WAS SLOW IN REACHING THE LOCATION OF THE BREAK AND SHUTTING DOWN THE LINE. [REDACTED] NOTED THAT THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE AREA MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID A SPILL OF LESS THAN 70,000 BBLs FROM ALMOST ANY BREAK OVER THE CATATUMBO RIVER.

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6. [REDACTED] SAID IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE HOW MUCH OF THE OIL SPILLED FEBRUARY 9 ENTERED VENEZUELA. NATURAL CONDITIONS AIDED DISPERSAL. HE EXPLAINED THAT SINCE CANO LIMON CRUDE IS LIGHT, 40 TO 50 PERCENT OF THE OIL SPILLED EVAPORATED WITHIN HOURS. MUCH OF THE REST WAS NATURALLY DISPERSED DUE TO THE WILDLY CHURNING RIVERS AND THE TERRAIN OF THE AREA. THE STATE OF THE RIVERS WAS PARTICULARLY FORTUNATE. ONLY A FEW WEEKS BEFORE, THE RIVERS WERE MUCH CALMER AND WOULD HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO DISPERSE THE SPILL SO QUICKLY. THE CHURNING WATERS ALSO LESSENERED ECOLOGICAL DAMAGE BY BREAKING UP THE SPILL RATHER THAN HAVING IT MOVE DOWNSTREAM IN A SINGLE MASS, SMOTHERING THE FISH AND OTHER ANIMALS UNDERNEATH.

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7. OXY DID NOT HAVE A FIGURE ON HOW MUCH OIL VENEZUELA HAD RECOVERED FROM THE FEBRUARY 9 SPILL OTHER THAN THE 10,000 BBLs FIGURE CITED IN THE COLOMBIAN PRESS. PRESS REPORTS ALSO SAID VENEZUELA WAS USING THE CRUDE TO REPAVE ROADS, AND THAT ECOPETROL HAD AGREED TO NEGOTIATE DAMAGE PAYMENTS.

8. THE BOGOTA PRESS CARRIED EXTENSIVE FRONT PAGE STORIES ON THE ECOLOGICAL DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE OIL SPILLS. EL TIEMPO GAVE A DRAMATIC ACCOUNT OF THE

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"80,000 BBLs" OIL SLICK FLOATING DOWN THE CATATUMBO RIVER TOWARD VENEZUELAN NATIONAL PARKS. IN ADDITION, THE "35,000 BBLs" SPILLED INTO THE SIMANA RIVER WAS THREATENING TO REACH THE ECONOMICALLY VITAL MAGDELENA RIVER IN CENTRAL COLOMBIA. THE PRESS REPORTED THAT RICE CROPS HAD BEEN RUINED, AND PEOPLE LIVING ALONG THE

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AFFECTED RIVERS WERE SUFFERING FROM DIARRHEA,
DEHYDRATION, AND DERMATITIS.

9. AN ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP CALLED "GREEN FORCE" TOOK OUT
A FULL PAGE AD ON THE BACK PAGE OF EL ESPECTADOR
ATTACKING THE "TERRORISTS" FOR THEIR ATTACKS ON THE
PIPELINE WHICH "BLOODIED ALL COLOMBIANS." THE AD
CHARGED THAT THE TERRORIST GROUP HAD LEFT 80,000
IMMEDIATE VICTIMS INCLUDING SMALL FARMERS IN THE LA
GLORIA DISTRICT (CESAR DEPARTMENT) WHERE 10,000 HECTARES
OF CROPS WERE THREATENED BY OIL AND CONTAMINATED WATER.
WATER SYSTEMS WERE REPORTEDLY RENDERED USELESS IN THE
VILLAGES OF SIMANA, SALOA, ZAPATOSA, AND AYACUCHO, AND
THREATENED IN OTHER AREAS. IN ADDITION, THOUSANDS OF
FISH WERE KILLED, "DIRECTLY AND GRAVELY AFFECTING THE
FOOD SUPPLY OF THE FAMILIES WHO LIVE ALONG THE RIVERS."
THE AD CLAIMED AN ADDITIONAL 70,000 FISHERMEN WHO
SURVIVE OFF THE MAGDELENA RIVER WHERE THREATENED.
ALTHOUGH "THIS TIME" INTENSE GOC EFFORTS WOULD LIKELY
PREVENT THE SPILL FROM REACHING THE RIVER, THE AD
SPECULATED, SUCH EFFORTS "WOULD PROBABLY FAIL THE NEXT
TIME CAUSING ECONOMIC, HUMAN AND ECOLOGICAL DAMAGE OF
INCALCULABLE PROPORTIONS."

10. ALTHOUGH HE NOTED THAT THE PUBLIC OUTCRY MIGHT HELP
DETER THE ELN FROM FURTHER ATTACKS ON THE LINE,
FELT THE PRESS ACCOUNTS WERE PROBABLY EXAGGERATED.
SIGNIFICANTLY, ECOPETROL HAD NOT INFORMED OXY OF ANY
HEALTH OR ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS. WHILE THERE WERE
UNDOUBTEDLY ISOLATED ECOLOGICAL AND HEALTH EFFECTS FROM
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 04 OF 04 BOGOTA 02730

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THE SPILLS, [] SERIOUSLY DOUBTED THAT THERE WOULD
BE LONG-LASTING DAMAGE TO THE ENVIRONMENT OR TO PEOPLE.
[] SAID ECOPETROL PREVENTED THE SPILLS FROM
REACHING THE MAGDELENA RIVER, ALTHOUGH THE OIL PASSED
THE SPILL CONTROL POINT IN SIMANA DESIGNED TO PROTECT
THE MAGDELENA BECAUSE THE EQUIPMENT CALLED FOR IN THE
SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN HAD NOT BEEN INSTALLED.

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11. DESPITE SUCH PROBLEMS, [] PRAISED ECOPETROL'S
"HALLMARK" EFFORTS TO CONTROL AND CLEAN UP THE SPILLS.
ACCORDING TO [] ECOPETROL USED THE OXY-DEvised
SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN AND FORMER OXY CONTRACTORS TO
EFFECTIVELY CONTROL THE SPILLS.

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12. POST HAS OBTAINED A MORE DETAILED CONFIDENTIAL
REPORT ON SPILL CLEAN UP EFFORTS AND WILL FORWARD IT TO
INTERESTED USG AGENCIES UPON REQUEST.
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